

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A device for vacuum sealing a food item package comprising:

- a first clam shell having a lip and a passage for supplying a vacuum to the lip;
- a second clam shell having a lip and a passage for supplying a vacuum to the lip;
- a vacuum supply applied to each of the lips of the clam shells;
- wherein the first and second clam shells may be engaged so as to form an air tight chamber; and
- a means for supplying compressed air into the air tight chamber.

2. The device of claim 1 wherein the lips are curved.

3. The device of claim 1 further comprising at least one locking mechanism comprising:

- a rotating axle;
- a swing arm rigidly attached to the rotating axle;
- a locking arm pivotally attached to the first clam shell and the swing arm;
- a second locking arm rotatably attached to the second clam shell in the swing arm;
- and
- such that when the rotating axis is rotated 180° the first clam shell and second clam shell are engaged to form an air tight chamber.

- 1       4.     A method for vacuum sealing a food item package comprising:
- 2                 enclosing a package portion of a food item packaging web within an air tight
- 3       chamber;
- 4                 a means for maintaining fluid communication between the package portion and the
- 5       remainder of the web such that air from the package portion of the web may enter the
- 6       remainder of the web; and
- 7                 supplying compressed air to the air tight chamber such that air within the package
- 8       portion of the web is forced into the remainder of the web.